NAQCC News

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In this issue:

1. December Challenge
2. November Sprint Results
3. General Club News
4. Chapter News
5. NAQCC Nets
6. CW Assistance (Elmer) Project
7. Latest Award and Prize Winners
8. Member Spotlight
9. News Items and Articles by Our Members

1. DECEMBER CHALLENGE: While contests and sprints are a great way to increase CW activity on the ham bands, there's another way to do so for those who don't like that type of activity for whatever reason. That's rag chewing. For any total neophyte reading this, rag chewing is getting on the air and really chatting with someone you work and getting to know them better. The ARRL has a Rag Chewers Club in which the definition of a rag chew is a QSO that lasts 30 minutes or longer. That's kind of an arbitrary figure because it really depends on CW speed how much information can be exchanged in a half-hour. At very slow speeds in very poor conditions, not much more than a very minimum of information may be exchanged. At very high speeds, you can almost get someone's life history in a half-hour. Perhaps it should be defined by how much info is exchanged rather than a minimum length of time. That is similar to what we do with QSOs for our Friendship Club award. We give more points for more info exchanged in a QSO. But that's another story and I stray off my path. For our December challenge we want you to make at least 10 QSO's during the month that last for a minimum of 20 minutes. Since rag chew definitions are arbitrary, that's what we have decided to use just to be a bit different.

Now finish reading the newsletter, then head to the challenge rules pages here to see any other details. Also check the prizes page here to see what prizes may be involved this month.

2. NOVEMBER SPRINT RESULTS: Yet another 100+ logs month in November. That's 19 of the last 20 sprints we exceeded 100 logs. We're proud of you, our members for your dedication to the sprints and the club in general. We also appreciate all the wonderful comments received about our sprints. We can't acknowledge each one individually due to time constraints, but every once in a while we like to share one or two at random here in the

newsletter sprint results.

From Randy K4LJA in LA, "John -- K3WWP -- Hope your head cold has eased up -- and that you feel better. Thanks to all of you for last night's Sprint ala NAQCC. It was my second attempt. I worked about 45-minutes and really enjoyed it. Learned a lot, too. Just wanted to say thanks -- to all of you who had a hand in the Sprint --- and those of you who do so much to add another enjoyable dimension to our great hobby. Thanks John --" Since I did mention my cold, and received several similiar comments about it, I left that in there and thank all of you for your comments about it. The cold is history now.

From N8VAR, "This was my first sprint. Yes, there's still some of us out there who haven't yet joined in the fun. :) The description of the events are pretty accurate. It was a relaxed contest type of environment which really helps with the jitters. My goal was to get in and make some contacts. I've been a little lax about getting on the air and wanted something I could get into, not spend lots of time, and make contacts. This was it. I have the next years events on my calendar and I look forward to jumping into the fray." Well, we've said our sprints are user-friendly to CW newcomers or those getting back to CW after being away, and unsolicited comments like that prove it, I believe.

Conditions were somewhat strange and seemed to show the 'black hole effect' as some areas (like mine) reported poor conditions while others reported very good conditions. A look at the results page shows this effect pretty clearly if you're familiar with how certain stations perform on average. A lot of stations stayed on 40 meters for most of the sprint with a record number of QSOs logged on that band. However don't forget 80 meters now that the cold weather months are here. Those who ventured on to 80 this month found conditions good there although still a bit noisy with leftover QRN.

You may note that in different places you'll see references to 112 or 113 logs. We received one log well past the deadline and it was not cross-checked and is only counted in certain places.

That's enough of a preamble. Let's get to the stats now.

Stats	Current Month	Previous Month	All-Time Record	Mo/Yr
Logs	113	107	135	8/10
Participants	165	169	211	8/10
Total QSOs	1831	1854	2069	9/11
Hour 1 QSOs	962	985	1085	9/11
Hour 2 QSOs	869	869	984	9/11
20M QSOs	199	535	1000	6/10
40M QSOs	1511	1185	1511	11/11
80M QSOs	121	134	927	1/11
Avg QSOs per stn	16.3	17.3	19.3	9/11

AWARDS	
SWA Category	
Division	**Winner**
W1	KB1PBA

W2	NW2K
W3	K3WWP
W4	K2UFT
W5	W5ODS
W6	KA6AIL
W7	WD8KRV
W8	NI8N
W9	AA9L
W0	KD0V
Canada	VA3PEN
DX	CO8CML
Other Categories	
Gain	K4BAI
First time entrant high scorer	N3QE
Paddle/bug handle K1/K2 knob insert drawing	NN9S

Congratulations to all including winners and non-winners. Actually there are no non-winners. Everyone who participated AND SENT IN A LOG is a winner because you have helped add to our voice shouting the praises of CW and QRP to show the ham radio world that there are many folks still using and enjoying CW on the ham bands. That's one of our main goals here at the NAQCC.

Very special thanks to those who reported their results even though they made only a few QSO's. Your reports are equally important.

This month 6 stations who didn't submit a log showed up 5 to 21 times in the 112 logs we did receive and cross-check. Hopefully they and many others will be back next month AND submit a log. Remember submitting a log doubles the strength of your statement that you support CW operation.

We welcome these hams who submitted a sprint log for the first time. We hope they will continue to participate and report their results:
N3QE WG8Y WA4ZOF W4OTN K0JQZ N1RU N8VAR K0LAR WA2EDN

GOLDEN LOGS. This feature of our sprints continues to be immensely popular among members. I get the impression that some folks look forward more to seeing if they had a GOLDEN LOG than to seeing the sprint scores. A GOLDEN LOG is a log in exactly the correct format as defined in the rules with every bit of info correct. Instead of penalizing mistakes, we reward perfection with a GOLDEN LOG listing.

There is a prize awarded to the one who has the most GOLDEN LOGS each year. In case of a tie, the one having the most total QSOs for the year will be the winner.

GOLDEN LOG's were submitted by 48 of 112 participants this month. To see if you're one of them, check the results page.

Here's a Top 5 (+ ties) list of most GOLDEN LOG's so far in 2011:

11 - N8XMS NQ2W WB8ENE
9 - KA8HDE KU4A

Thanks to all GOLDEN LOGgers for making my cross-checking job that much easier.

Every once in a while, I find it interesting to look at some Top 5 or Top 10 lists from our sprints. Here are the top 10 scores in the GAIN and SWA categories including what antenna(s) were used:

```
GAIN
7872 K4BAI Apr 2010 beam@55',cfz@50',dpl@50',invv@50'
7424 K4BAI Jun 2011 th6dxx@55',40 dpl@50'
7192 K4BAI May 2011 beam@55',dpls@50'
6642 K4BAI Nov 2011 TH6DXX@55',40dpl@50'
5916 AB0TX Nov 2011 triband@63',40 rotary dpl@67'
5904 K4BAI Sep 2011 th6dxx@55',40 dpl@55'
5676 N4BP  Jun 2010 a4s@65',40/80 trp dpl@62'
5408 K4BAI Sep 2008 TH6DXX@55', 40M dpl
5400 K4BAI May 2009 beam@55',dpl@40',zepp@45',invV@50'
5184 K4BAI Aug 2011 th6dxx@55',cfz@50',40dpl@50'

SWA
6552 NW2K  Jul 2011 80 loop@30'
6540 NW2K  May 2011 80 loop@30'
6250 N8BB  May 2010 mystery ant@55'
6206 NW2K  Jun 2011 loop@30'
5568 NW2K  Sep 2011 80 loop@30'
5544 W5YDM May 2011 80-40-20 fan@21'
5544 K9OSC Sep 2011 cf zepp@30'
5400 N0TA  Mar 2011 gnd mtd vert
5376 K3WWP Dec 2010 ~110' attic rnd wire
5200 K4ORD Oct 2011 40 dpl@40',160 dpl@35'
```

Let's distill that down a bit further. Since 2 stations dominate the results (rightfully so with their antennas, location, and contesting skill), let's look at the top 10 DIFFERENT scorers in each category:

```
GAIN
7872 K4BAI Apr 2010 beam@55',cfz@50',dpl@50',invv@50'
5916 AB0TX Nov 2011 triband@63',40 rotary dpl@67'
5676 N4BP  Jun 2010 a4s@65',40/80 trp dpl@62'
4074 KK7S  Jul 2010 hexbeam@40'
3344 NG7Z  Jun 2011 7 el yagi@??'
3105 W8RTJ Apr 2011 2 el yagi@50'
2997 K1ZZI Jan 2011 3el yagi@??',dlta loop@??'
2816 K4ZGB Nov 2011 yagis@??'
2268 AA4W  Jun 2010 2el yagi@43',40 vert
2184 N4NM  Jul 2010 20 C4@25', 40 rot dpl@35'

SWA
6552 NW2K  Jul 2011 80 loop@30'
6250 N8BB  May 2010 mystery ant@55'
```

```
5544 W5YDM May 2011 80-40-20 fan@21'
5544 K9OSC Sep 2011 cf zepp@30'
5400 N0TA  Mar 2011 gnd mtd vert
5376 K3WWP Dec 2010 ~110' attic rnd wire
5200 K4ORD Oct 2011 40 dpl@40',160 dpl@35'
4850 NF8M  Sep 2011 20 hamstick,40 ocf dpl@35'
4650 KD2MX Sep 2011 600' loop@25'
4600 K4BAI Jul 2010 cfzepp@50',dpl@50',invV@55'
```

Full sprint info here.

3. GENERAL CLUB NEWS:

- We haven't gotten too many requests for QSLs or certificates for our 7th anniversary operation. If you worked a N#A station during the celebration, you can still request a QSL or certificate. Details can be found on the club web site here.

- We have received several generous donations to the club after mentioning our finances the last couple newsletters. We hope we don't have to mention that topic again for a while now, although your continuing donations are welcome any time. We sent thank you emails to most all who sent a donation. Tom has a few more that need to be processed yet. We will send a thank you email to those folks also because we do certainly appreciate your help. There is one person though to whom we can't send an email because that person did an excellent job of making himself or herself anonymous. So we'll say thanks to 'anonymous' here for your $100.00 donation. And extra thanks to all other donors.

- Just our usual quick reminder we're continuing with the hidden call sign idea originally suggested by Bill KB3XS. It amazes (and disappoints) me that apparently a lot of members have no interest in reading the newsletter. The call in this newsletter will be the 61st different one, and so far of the 60 previous ones, only 8 have found their call. Only 1 in the last 22 newsletters. As we remind you every issue, somewhere in this newsletter is a call sign of a member in a place that is definitely out of context and containing a mix of upper and lower case letters. If it is YOUR call sign and YOU find it, email **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** BEFORE the publication date of the next newsletter (Dec 10) and win a gift certificate for 100 NAQCC QSL cards produced by the CheapQSLs.com company run by Hal K6RF (#0171) and donated by the NAQCC thanks to your generous monetary donations to the club. Cheap refers only to the price of the cards, NOT the quality which is superb.

4. CHAPTER NEWS:

Here is where our club chapters present news about their chapter activities. We currently have four chapters - European, Minnesota, Texas, and Western Pennsylvania. We're looking forward to expanding that roster. Chapters are more or less independent local gatherings organized by members in a geographical area and subject to a list of guidelines under the auspices of the NAQCC. If you would be interested in starting a chapter in your area, let us know and we'll send a copy of the guidelines.

NAQCC EUROPEAN CHAPTER:

Items in this section are from EU Chapter President Matt MW3YMY unless otherwise credited.

Questions or comments should go to **MATT@MATTIRELAND.CO.UK**
The EU Chapter web site is at http://www.naqcc-eu.org/

NAQCC MINNESOTA CHAPTER:

Items in this section are from Chapter President Rich WD0K (L) and/or Keith K0HJC (R) unless otherwise credited.
Questions or comments should go to pix_email_wd0k or pix_email_k0hjc .

Another fine sprint has been logged into history. The following Friday, Nov. 18, five NAQCC members assembled for breakfast. Along with our YLs, we had a great time conversing and bragging obout our wins. We were thankful for the increased solar flux and low K index. We also noted a new MN member and first time participant; K0LAR #5698. Our December breakfast will be held at Bakers Square in Apple Valley on the first Friday after the sprint at 10am. We hope to see you there. All NAQCC members are most welcome.

November has been a busy antenna month here in Little Canada. I finished my Center fed Zep and ran a new feed line for my Delta Loop. Thanks to K0HJC and some donated items, we have a new feedline about 270 feet long, supported by newly installed garage sale telephone line insulators. Fed in the corner and vertically polarized, this configuration did fairly well in the recent SSB sweepstakes contest the past weekend. All I heard I could work with the exception of a station in the Virgin Islands.

I received a letter from KD0V #2002 the past month asking, Why QRP? It seems like his experience and info could stand to be repeated for old and new QRP cw ops. Merlin writes:

"During September and October, I had a great time using QRP, receiving two QSO-A-DAY Awards, 0004 and 0005. The amazing thing about it is that the higher the solar flux and sun spot number the easier QRP becomes, so why even bother to turn to the QRO rig? October 31, I had a good rag chew with KA3AAY using the NorCal 40A at 2 watts. When Ron found out I was only using 2 watts he cranked his power down from 100 to 5 watts and we continued on the qso for another 25 minutes. Great QSO. November 02, had a qso with K0BSP #2156 using same rig at 2 watts; Ken kept sending back, 2 watts? He couldn't believe I was only using 2 watts.

It is really amazing what can be done using QRP when the band conditions are good. QRP is just not for the monthly sprints, but for some real communicating. It is great for DX too. The length of a couple recent DX QSOs were about 15 minutes, so they were not just an exchange of signal reports."

Very well said Merlin; thanks for that letter.

Our ole Friend and sprint op, K0HJC #3976 is still on the sick list here at the News Shack,and I will continue covering for him. (attempting at best)! Keith sure would love to receive a card or two to help cheer him up. I am sure he is FB on QRZ!

Thanksgiving Day is here again and my XYL Marilyn, #2901 K0MLT, and myself, Rich, WD0K #664 would love to wish all a Happy Holiday Season!

NAQCC TEXAS CHAPTER:

Items in this section are from TX Chapter Director Ron K5DUZ unless otherwise credited.
Questions or comments should go to **WEBMASTER7388@NAQCCTX.COM**
The TX Chapter web site is at http://www.naqcctx.com/

The East Texas QRS Net (ETN) is meeting each Monday evening at 1900 CDST (2400 UTC) on 7121 KHz. Since the move to 40m, Allen, KA5TJS #4512 (NCS) has had check-ins from as far away as Florida, New York and Washington state. The ETN net is open to all comers, not just stations in the Texas area, so if you hear the net in session please check-in.

The 40m band is beginning to "go long" at net time and S.A. SSB is becoming a problem. We are considering implementing a split 40m/80m session until the eventual change to 80m, so be sure to check the weekly NAQCC net e-mail for the latest ETN info. Remember to tune around a bit if there is QRM on 7121 KHz.

The November NAQCC Sprint, held Wednesday evening, November 16th, saw Evan, W5IQS #3924 as the lone Texas Chapter member that submitted a log. The W5 area scores were down considerably this month so perhaps conditions were to blame for the low Texas Chapter turnout. The December Sprint will be on Tuesday evening, Dec. 13th (USA time). If you haven't worked the Sprint before, give it a try.

Remember that all NAQCC members located in Texas (337 at last count) are automatically members of the Texas Chapter. We would love to hear from you about any of your recent ham activities, new QRP rig or antenna.

NAQCC WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER:

Items in this section are from John K3WWP unless otherwise credited.
Questions or comments should go to **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET**
All chapter news can be found ONLY here in this section of the newsletter.

Remember any NAQCC member residing in any of the blue counties on the map above is a member of the WPA chapter and welcome to report their QRP/CW activities as a NAQCC WPA Chapter activity. Encourage your NAQCC friends in the area to join in those activities, and perhaps get together in person for a portable operation, a kit building session, or anything else as Mike KC2EGL, Don K3RLL (when he's up north for the late spring through early fall), Tom WY3H, and John K3WWP do many times each year. In person fellowship is a great way to get to know your fellow members much better, and is vastly superior to all of this Internet "socializing" going on these days.

Tom WY3H and John K3WWP got together on Thanksgiving to deliver turkey dinners to the veterans at a local veterans center then went to Tom's home for a dinner prepared by Tom's wife. Before and after dinner Tom showed of his new workshop/ham shack to me. I brought my

KX-1 to show it to Tom. Using his HW-9, I worked P40L, FY5KE, and HK1R all on 15 meters.

Mike KC2EGL and John K3WWP will also be getting together sometime before the end of the month for their regular monthly get-together. We don't have any specific plans, but we will do something interesing for sure, and of course will engage in our 'second favorite' hobby - eating at some local establishment.

5. NAQCC QRS NETS:

News and net reports in this section are from QRS Net Manager Dan AF4LB unless otherwise credited.
Dan will handle all Net related material at this email address:
pix email af4lb

We'd like to repeat this announcement from the last newsletter with some updated info. Dan has informed us that he will be undergoing surgery and will need someone to fill in as NCS for the Main Net on Sunday evenings and the East Coast Net on Thursday evenings for a few weeks after his surgery. He just notified us that the date of the surgery has now been set for February 15. So if you can help out by being a NCS for a few weeks after that date, please email Dan at the email address above and let him know. If no one steps forward, we will have to discontinue those two nets until Dan can be NCS again. That would be a shame as our nets are really picking up steam right now with more an more check-ins. So come on and step forward. The NCS job is neither hard nor time-consuming. Thanks.

Although there was definitely net activity, there is no activity report this issue due to Thanksgiving.

NAQCC NETS schedule and recent activity report:

NAQCC Main QRS Net (NQN)

Sunday evenings 2000 EDST local time which is Monday 0000Z on 7041 kHz.
Main NCS - Dan AF4LB

Date(UTC)	NCS	Participants

NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN)

Monday evenings 1900 CDST local time which is Tuesday 0000Z on 7121 kHz.
Main NCS - Allen KA5TJS

Date(UTC)	NCS	Participants

NAQCC Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental QRS net (RMR)

Tuesday afternoons 1400 MDST local time which is Tuesday 2100Z on 14062.5 kHz.
Main NCS - Dale WC7S

Date(UTC)	NCS	Participants

NAQCC Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental QRS net (RMR)

Thursday afternoons 1400 MDST local time which is Thursday 2100Z on 14062.5 kHz.
Main NCS - Dale WC7S

Date(UTC) NCS Participants

NAQCC East Coast QRS Net (ECN)

Thursday evenings 2130 EDST local time which is Friday 0130Z on 7041 kHz.
Main NCS - Dan AF4LB

Date(UTC) NCS Participants

NAQCC Pacific NorthWest QRS Net (PNW)

Thursday evenings 1900 PDST local time which is Friday 0200Z on 3574 kHz.
Main NCS - Stewart KE7LKW

Date(UTC) NCS Participants

If the nets are not heard on the exact listed frequencies, tune around a bit, generally higher in frequency. Be sure to check K7nGc the Net Info email sent each Sunday to all active mail list subscribers for up-to-the-minute info on the nets.

For more net info, see the CW Assistance / QRS Nets section of the web site.

6. THE NAQCC CW ASSISTANCE (ELMER) PROJECT:

The CW Assistance project is coordinated by Ron K5DUZ. Items in this section are from Ron unless otherwise credited. If you are interested in helping out or need help with any CW and/or QRP matters contact Ron at **NAQCCSKED@FLASH.NET**

Remember Ron is busy with a work project, and he asks that other members send in their thoughts on learning CW, improving CW speed, CW procedures, etc. to fill in here until he returns full-time to this column. So far we've had only a couple responses, so come on, I'm sure more of you have ideas you'd like to share.

We had the following all set to go last issue until some gremlins took over and mysteriously erased it, so let's try again. Thanks to Dean NW2K for the following info on a program that will give you some almost real-time very realistic practice for contesting or sprinting. Dean is an excellent contester/sprinter as you know if you read our sprint results each month, so he knows first-hand of what he speaks here.

An Introduction to Morse Runner: A CW Contest Simulator - NW2K, Dean

While I have been licensed for years, I just got back on the air late last year and am learning about CW and QRP. One thing for sure, the connection between my ears and brain needs work and I'll take all the help I can get.

There are several software tools to help folks learn Morse code. There are even "apps"

available for certain smart phones (take a look at AA9PW.com). Most of these software tools provide practice using clean sounding CW, which is far from real life conditions. Summer nights and QRP CW sprints call for more realistic practice tools.

Morse Runner (MR) is a fine piece of software offered by VE3NEA, which allows one to practice CW in noise-rich and target-rich environments. And.....it's free.

MR is really a CW contest simulator and one uses the keyboard for input in much the same manner as regular contest loggers like GenLog. MR has an excellent graphical user interface. You just need to become comfortable with hitting function keys or clicking with your mouse.

Here is a brief outline of how to configure MR:
Input station callsign, CW speed, CW sidetone pitch, RX filter bandwidth, and choose QSK or not. Then choose the Band Conditions, under which you would like to practice. There are check boxes for: QRN, QRM, QSB, Flutter and even Lids! You can choose one enemy to fight at a time or you can choose them all simultaneously. It even has RIT. You can also choose how many stations respond to your CQ so you can manage the size of your pileup!

The software has four modes but I like to practice using the CQ WPX contest simulator since it requires you to copy callsigns and serial numbers, which is good practice for NAQCC sprints. It keeps score and flags mistakes like incorrect serial number, wrong call etc.

Rather than provide a how-to here, it's best to install the software and read the associated help file, which is quite good in all respects. MR adds an additional tool to the arsenal to help improve CW skills in real-life environments.

The latest version of Morse Runner is 1.68 and it is compatible with Windows 95/98/ME/NT4/2000/XP and it has minimal requirements. Download, install and add headphones. Here is the link to the website: http://www.dxatlas.com/MorseRunner/. Downloads are available in the right-hand column. There is a Yahoo! Group where one can obtain help and advice (find the link at the Morse Runner website). Have Fun!

7. RECENT AWARD AND PRIZE WINNERS:

CERTIFICATES:

FRIENDSHIP CLUB
0010 - VE3FUJ 10/18/11

1000 MPW
0115 - VE3FUJ 10/18/11
0116 - VE3FUJ 10/24/11
0117 - AF4LB 10/25/11
0118 - W9UX 10/27/11

30-30 MAGNUM
0007 - K1YAN 10/9/11 (May Jun Jul)

QSO-a-Day (One month)
2011 0003 - W9UX 10/4/11 (Sep)
2011 0004 - KD0V 10/31/11 (Sep)
2011 0005 - KD0V 10/31/11 (Oct)

SUFFIX WORDS
0006 - K1YAN 10/9/11

WAC Category A (QRP)
0018 - W9UX 10/27/11
0019 - NW2K 11/3/11

WAS Category A
0015 N5LYJ 10/27/11

WAVE Category A
0001 K3WWP 11/18/11
0002 W9UX 11/23/11

ENDORSEMENTS and HONOR ROLL LISTINGS:

Friendship Club
1900 pts - K3WWP 11/19/11
800 pts - NW2K 11/23/11

WAC
10 Meters - K1YAN 10/20/11
10 Meters - K3WWP 10/27/11
12 Meters - K3WWP 11/12/11
17 Meters - K3WWP 11/13/11

WAVE
Yukon - W9UX 11/23/11

It's so wonderful to see all the new awards and endorsements issued recently. Perhaps the vastly improved conditions are a big factor. Or perhaps it's just that members are learning the fun of earning our awards. None of them are over-challenging and can be earned by any member with just a little effort. Also remember there are NO fees for our award certificate if you can accept an email certificate that you print out yourself. Finally working toward awards serves the main purpose of the NAQCC - providing more CW activity on the bands to show those of the ham population that CW is far from dead, and your earning them with QRP shows just how well CW/QRP (simple wire antennas) works as well as how great an operator you are, and we congratulate each and every one of you listed above as well as all those who've earned our awards since the club's inception back in 2004.

8. MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

This section is managed by Paul N8XMS and any questions about it should go to PAUL142857@GMAIL.COM. Paul selects members at random and asks them if they would like to be featured in the Member Spotlight in the newsletter.

Floyd Larck KK3Q #4850

I was formerly a heavy truck mechanic and the truckers began using "CB radio" while on the road and so I put one in my service truck. My Dad went on a call with me and became enthralled by CB and soon had one in his house. CB was different back then, even respectable. I put up various antennas for Dad and I learned the antenna was 90% of a station. Dad's friend ran a Kenwood radio on 11 meters and I was captivated by the radio and its many knobs. I'd never heard of ham radio and was told you needed a license to run a ham radio and that a truck mechanic like me couldn't hope to get a ham license. That was challenge enough for me.

The practice tapes at 5WPM were totally Greek to me. I never went for my Novice license going after the Technician because I had seen a friend's 2-meter handheld (remember the "hand-helds" of the 70's?) and wanted one. Along the way I grew to love CW and found that, despite my hearing problems, I became quite good at it. Nighttime turned into daylight as I sat working countries far away from my QTH. 13WPM was, for me, the most difficult to earn and the 20WPM test was quite easy even for me and I finally made it to Extra Class and the privileges offered only to Extra Class.

I still use my faithful Bencher and have been chastised by some CW ops for not using the computer to send and receive. But I worked too hard to learn CW to do it any other way. That isn't to say that those who use these latest technologies are doing anything wrong but I am old

school and prefer sending and receiving the way I learned it. I enjoy chasing DX and ragchewing as I value any contact whether its "KK3Q tu 599 599 bk" or a chat with another ham as you learn about other people's lives, their other hobbies, and their cultures. I recall a phone call from a telemarketer one evening (long before cellphones) as I was on 15 meters. When he heard the CW coming from the speaker he asked if I was on a submarine and I replied, "Yes, I am and you are interrupting our drill". And I hung up on him, imagine his confusion!

73,
Floyd, KK3Q

9. NEWS ITEMS AND ARTICLES BY OUR MEMBERS:

This section is a forum for you to tell other members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit an article dealing with some aspect of CW and QRP operation or equipment. Examples might include, but not limited to, antenna projects, QRP and/or SDR equipment, tuners, battery technology, keyers, logging, or other related topic of interest to the QRP community.
Send your news items and articles to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**. Deadline for submitting news items for the next newsletter is Dec 8. For your convenience any links in this section will open in a new browser window so you can come immediately back here to the newsletter just by closing that extra window. DISCLAIMER: Any views expressed in this section are those of the member submitting them, and may or may not be those of the NAQCC or its officers.

- **From John K3WWP #0002 -** I continue to enjoy my new K2 and appreciate the fine receiver it contains. I went through the filter alignment again using a program called Spectrogram. It makes alignment a visual project rather than aural and is thus more accurate. The program is free, at least earlier versions of it - the latest version is not. Just do a Bing search for "spectrogram" if you want to try it out. It's good for just about any audio application where seeing a visual representation of the audio spectrum would help.

If you get it for aligning your K2, then do a Bing search for "n0ss k2 filter alignment" for some excellent walkthroughs on aligning various things in the K2.

I haven't done much DXing lately, but I did get my band-country # 1,000 when I worked Guernsey on 12 meters courtesy of MU0FAL which was also country # 99 on 12 meters. Now if I can just get that one more new one on 12, I'll have 100+ all bands from 40 through 10. I also reached a couple milestones in working prefixes. I now have over 1,000 worked on 10 meters, and 1,000 confirmed on 20 meters.

One more achievement was earning our very first NAQCC WAVE award. That's our award created by Gary K1YAN for working Canadian provinces. Took some time to get Manitoba, and as soon as I worked VE4WI on a schedule, that completed my effort and I got the award.

- **From Jerry VE6CPP #5697 -** I just wanted to update everyone on Earl's (VA6RF #1547) progress. He had been involved in a head-on collision with a pickup truck while traveling on his motorcycle. I spoke with a fellow ham who visited Earl in the hospital in Calgary recently and he reported that Earl is doing great. He said Earl's room was filled with many family members celebrating Earl's 65th Birthday on Nov. 12th. Earl was sitting up and was all smiles when he was handed the latest copy of QST. (We all know how boring a hospital stay can be!) Earl's

rehab is on-going and he may be sent to a different hospital to finish rehab before being released but no dates are known as of yet.

- **From Jack NI8N #4037 -** Zero Beating -- Let's review how to zero beat a signal, so when the other station listens, we will be exactly on his frequency. Most all rigs have a "spot" button. Pushing it results in an audio tone. This tone generally has the same pitch as your CW sidetone monitor. Leaving this on, tune across the signal of the station you want to zero beat. As you tuneacross the signal, the incoming audio pitch will be higher going to lower, or lower going to higher. Somewhere in tuning, the pitch of the two audio tones will match. The received tone will seem to disappear behind the spot tone. When this happens, you are zero beat and you can turn off the 'spot' button.

Why do this? In a crowded band, as often found during one of our sprints, there may be several signals in the passband, making it difficult to pick out the one we want to work. This occurs when our filter is set to a wide range like 1 or 2 khz. So we often use a narrower filter like 500, 400, or 250 hz to eliminate some of the interfering signals.

For example, I call "CQ NA de NI8N K" and listen for an answer. If you are not zero beat with me and you are more than 500 hz (I'm using my 500 hz filter) away in frequency, I will not hear you.

You must turn off your RIT and XIT in order to zero beat correctly. If activated, the RIT and XIT will throw you off the frequency of the station you are trying to work. We older hams started out using receivers with very wide passbands because the narrow filters were not then available on the rigs we could afford. We learned to pick the desired station out of the pile of other signals. Of course, that was when I was much younger. Now I'm spoiled by this wonderful technology. See you in the next Sprint!

- **From Steve WB2LQF #4740 -** I enjoyed immensely QRP Column #92 by John, K3WWP (#2) in the recent FISTS Keynote. I too am addicted to QRP and simple antennas. I also happen to live in a townhouse with plenty of 'rules' to navigate. Nonetheless, I am enjoying my hobby to the max! I try to spread the word about QRP, CW, and simple antennas every day. I do this through my club associations, online groups, on the air, and via my own personal webpages and Youtube videos. It can be frustrating to be told by those whose belief systems revolve around objective measurements and models that my antenna solutions are marginal, if that. It can be equally exhilarating to get an email from someone in a similar situation to mine who found one of my solutions to be "just right" for his or her own compromised environment.

My bottom line is simple: If it looks like it works and I make a lot of contacts, then it probably works!

My newest "discovery" is an end-fed half-wave vertical that has turned out to be the long sought "perfect condo/townhouse antenna" for me. No radials, no counterpoise, an 18-inch footprint, put up in 30 seconds, tear down in 45 seconds, very low profile, full size, no loading coils to heat up, and it works great! End-fed halfwave antennas approach 90% efficiency when operated at their half wavelength frequencies and above. My vertical provides a nice alternative to my 44' Cebik-style attic doublet. It's also my antenna of choice for portable work because it shrinks down to 3.8', weighs very little, and fits in my VW Beetle.

I thought you might like to view the video I made with my very good friend and fellow QRP CW addict, Tony W1ZMB. I brought my antenna to his house and we compared it to his 135' OCF dipole.. This was a casual comparison, not an objective multi-parameter review; just a simple A/B test. My antenna was very competitive! If you'd like to see the video, it is here:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uWkpQ785Pjo.

All comments on specific sections of the newsletter should go to the email address given in that section. Any other general comments go to:

NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless you specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Past on-line newsletters beginning with issue #042 are now archived and INDEXED on the site. So if you missed seeing any past issues, you can check them out in the archives.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.